

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 188624 ACTION ADDIS ABABA 28 AUG

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QUOTE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT ACTIONADDIS ABAB OF 28 AUG 74:

QUOTE: UNCLAS STATE 188624

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS:MASS,ET

SUBJECT: MILITARY AID TO ETHIOPIA (AUG. 26 PRESS BRIEFING)

REF: ADDIS 10124

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE AUG. 26 PRESS
BRIEFING DEALING WITH U.S. MILITARY AID TO ETHIOPIA:

QUOTE Q. THERE WAS A REPORT TODAY, THAT HAS BEEN PARTIALLY
CONFIRMED IN THIS BUILDING, THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE
IN MILITARY AID TO ETHIOPIA; IT'S IN THE PIPELINE AND IS
ARRIVING. CAN YOU COMMENT?

A. YES. THE REPORT IS ESSENTIALLY TRUE. THE ETHIOPIAN
GOVERNMENT, HAVING NOTED THAT SOMALIA PUBLICLY CLAIMS
CERTAIN AREAS OF ETHIOPIA, CAME TO US FOR ASSISTANCE IN
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INCREASING ITS DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY; AND WE HAVE DECIDED

TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THIS APPEAL.

Q. WHEN WAS THIS -- A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO?

A. I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE EXACT TIME.

Q. BOB, HOW MUCH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ETHIOPIA IN THE PAST,
AND WHEN DID SOMALIA MAKE THIS CLAIM HERE?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHAT IS ETHIOPIA'S --

A. I DON'T KNOW THE EXACT TIME SOMALILAND MADE THIS
CLAIM.

Q. SOMALILAND?

A. SOMALIA -- EXCUSE ME. AS FOR AID IN THE PAST, IN
FISCAL YEAR '74 IT WAS, I BELIEVE, 11.3 MILLION DOLLARS
IN GRANT AND ABOUT 11 MILLION IN FOREIGN MILITARY SALES.

INSOFAR AS THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, I CAN NOT GIVE YOU
ANYTHING ON THAT RIGHT NOW BECAUSE CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF
THE PACKAGE ARE STILL UNDER REVIEW. I JUST HAVE NOTHING
ON THAT.

Q. ALSO, COULD YOU TELL US AS TO WHAT ETHIOPIA HAS
ASKED FOR AND WHAT HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO THEM SINCE THIS
REQUEST CAME IN?

A. I'LL LOOK INTO THAT. I DON'T HAVE IT HERE. IF I
CAN BE HELPFUL, I WILL ON IT. I'M NOT SURE HOW HELPFUL
I CAN BE. I'M SORRY.

Q. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP, BOB, BETWEEN WHAT WE HAVE
NOW AGREED TO GIVE ETHIOPIA AND WHAT HAILE SELASSIE ASKED
FOR WHEN HE CAME HERE? HE HAD A LIST OF THINGS THAT HE
WANTED.

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A. I JUST DON'T KNOW THE RELATIONSHIP. I DO NOT KNOW

THE ORIGINAL REQUEST OR SHOPPING LIST -- OR WHATEVER YOU
WANT TO CALL IT. I JUST DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON
THAT.

Q. THAT REPORT ALSO SAID THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER
OVERRULED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PENTAGON AND THE STATE

DEPARTMENT NOT TO INCREASE THE AID. ANY COMMENT ON THAT?

A. TWO COMMENTS. NO. 1, I BELIEVE THAT REPORT SAID THAT IT WAS AT A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN THE MONTH OF MAY; AND, AS A NUMBER OF US KNOW, HE WASN'T EVEN HERE IN THE MONTH OF MAY. HE WAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATING.

SECONDLY, INsofar AS ANY INTRA-GOVERMENTAL, INTER-DEPARTMENTAL DISCUSSIONS TO, WE DON'T COMMENT ON THE NATURE OF

THOSE DISCUSSIONS, AND ALL THE PROS AND CONS THAT ARE GIVEN ON ANY GIVEN SUBJECT HERE; BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO GO INTO THE INTERNAL DELIBERATIONS OF OUR GOVERNMENT ON THIS QUESTION OR ANY -- YES?

Q. BOB, JUST FOR THE RECORD --

A. YES.

Q. -- THE FACT THAT THE SECRETARY WAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST SHOULD NOT HAVE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO EXERCISE A DECIDING VOICE IN ANY DECISION OF THAT NATURE. AND WE WERE TOLD DURING MAY THAT HE DID CARRY ON HIS RESPONSIBILITIES -- BOTH AS SECRETARY AND NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR. SO ONE WOULD NOT RULE OUT THE OTHER.

A. NO. I WOULD NOT RULE THAT OUT. I AGREE WITH YOU A HUNDRED PERCENT. THE ONLY COMMENT I DID WANT TO MAKE ON THIS REPORT WAS THAT THEY SAID THERE WAS AN NSC MEETING HERE IN WHICH HE PARTICIPATED.

Q. YES.

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A. HE COULDN'T HAVE PHYSICALLY DONE IT. BUT I AGREE WITH YOUR STATEMENT, MARV, THAT HE COULD HAVE MADE THE DECISION THEN, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS ABROAD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NECESSARY DEPARTMENTS BACK HERE.

Q. BOB, WE HAVE A REPORT TODAY THAT EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE IS VIRTUALLY A PRISONER IN HIS PALACE, UNDER SIEGE BY ARMY OFFICERS WHO ARE DECIDING HIS FATE. IS THIS GOING TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THIS FLOW OF WEAPONS TO ETHIOPIA?

A. I CAN'T COMMENT ON THE EXACT STATE OF WHAT THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IS IN ETHIOPIA. OBVIOUSLY, WE ARE WATCHING IT VERY CLOSELY.

Q. ARE WE DEALING WITH THE SAME GOVERNMENT NOW THAT ASKED FOR THE WEAPONS?

A. AS FAR AS I KNOW, YES.

Q. BOB, DO WE HAVE A DOLLAR FIGURE ON THE INCREASE?

A. WELL, I SAID EARLIER, OZZIE, I CAN'T GO INTO IT NOW BECAUSE THE FINAL PACKAGE IS UNDER REVIEW.

Q. WELL, HAS THIS BEEN APPROVED BY CONGRESS, THIS INCREASE IN SUPPLY, OR WHERE IS IT?

A. IT ISN'T.

Q. IT APPEARS TO BE IN THE PIPELINE, SO SOMEONE IS SENDING IT.

A. NO. AS FOR FY 75, THE FINAL PACKAGE IS STILL UNDER REVIEW AND, OBVIOUSLY, IT EITHER WILL BE OR IS BEING DISCUSSED WITH THE HILL' BUT MY BRIEFING IS NOT CLEAR ON IT.

Q. BUT HOW CAN IT BE THAT THE WEAPONS ARE IN TRANSIT AND ARE ARRIVING IF IT HASN'T GONE THROUGH THE UNCLASSIFIED

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LEGISLATIVE PROCESS?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE WEAPONS THAT ARE ACTUALLY ARRIVING THERE NOW MAY HAVE COME OUT OF THE FY 74 FUNDS. I'M JUST NOT CLEAR ENOUGH ON THAT, OZZIE.

Q. YOU MEAN WE'RE JUST UPGRADING WHAT WE'RE ASKING THE HILL TO GIVE ETHIOPIA.

A. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

Q. I MEAN -- I'M SORRY. I HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM HE DOES. I DON'T KNOW HOW WE'RE INCREASING OUR AID TO ETHIOPIA WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL.

A. OH, NO.

Q. NO. I KNOW WE'RE NOT DOING THAT, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS.

A. THE FINAL PACKAGE IS UNDER REVIEW NOW, AND OBVIOUSLY--

Q. ON THE HILL.

A. -- NOTHING WILL BE DONE -- IT'S UP ON THE HILL NOW,
AND OUR PEOPLE ARE TALKING WITH HILL PEOPLE; AND
NOTHING WILL BE DONE, OBVIOUSLY, UNTIL CONGRESS APPROVES
IT.

Q. WELL, ONE OF THE POINTS OF THE WASHINGTON POST
ARTICLE WAS THAT THIS STUFF IS ARRIVING THERE NOW.

A. WELL, AS I SAID EARLIER, THE PHYSICAL -- SAY, THE
TANKS, OR WHATEVER IT WAS IN THE POST ARTICLE -- THEY

MUST BE COMING OUT OF FY 74. BUT I'LL LOOK INTO THAT
AND GET A LITTLE MORE DETAIL FOR YOU. O.K.?

Q. YES.

Q. BOB --
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A. YES.

Q. -- EVER SINCE SOMALI INDEPENDENCE OVER THEIR BORDER
IN THE OVERLAND DESERT, AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF HEAT --
AND WE'VE BEEN SUPPLYING THEM REGULARLY THROUGH THE YEARS
--ETHIOPIA, THAT IS -- WHAT NOW HAS DEVELOPED TO CAUSE
THIS REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY HELP?

A. WELL, I JUST STAND ON WHAT I SAID RIGHT IN THE
BEGINNING, DICK, HERE ON THAT.

Q. O.K. SOMALIA ALSO DISAGREES WITH KENYA -- ITS OTHER
NEIGHBOR -- OVER THEIR BORDER. HAS KENYA ASKED FOR
ANY HELP?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. HAVE YOU SAID ANYWHERE -- AND I MISSED IT -- AT WHAT
POINT, GENERALLY, THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN TO GRANT THE
INCREASED AID TO ETHIOPIA?

A. ON THE TIMING, STEWART? I DID NOT.

Q. YES. THE REASON I ASKED IS THAT THERE'S BEEN AN
ARTICLE OF FAITH IN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AROUND
HERE FOR YEARS THAT THE ETHIOPIANS WERE ASKING FOR A
HELLUVA LOT MORE THAN THEY NEEDED; AND THERE'S A CHANGE
HERE, AND I'M WONDERING WHEN IT OCCURRED.

A. I'LL HAVE TO FIND OUT. I JUST DON'T KNOW, STEWART.

Q. CAN YOU SAY, BOB --

A. YES.

Q. -- AT WHAT LEVEL THE REQUEST WAS MADE? WAS IT JUST
BY THE EMPEROR, OR AT A VERY HIGH LEVEL, OR THROUGH
CHANNELS -- OR WHAT?

A. I'LL HAVE TO LOOK INTO IT. I MEAN DANA SAID THAT IT
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CAME OVER -- IT WAS RAISED DURING THE EMPEROR'S VISIT

HERE, AND I WANT TO CHECK IT ALL OUT.
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